



4 March 2021

Attention: All Editors

For immediate release

UNIVERSITY OF FORT HARE ANNOUNCES CONVOCATION ELECTION AND AGM

- **UFH harnesses international award-winning e-voting platform EISA**
- **New Convocation Executive Committee to become key partners in the University's 'Decade of Renewal – 2020-2030'**
- **New Committee final foundation to steer UFH into a new era of excellence**

Alice, Eastern Cape, 4 March 2021 -- Last week, the University announced that the elective convocation annual general meeting (AGM) will take place this week.

The E-voting for the executive committee commenced today (Thursday, 4 March 2021) at 08:30 AM and will close at 08:00 AM on Saturday (6 March 2021). The election outcomes will be announced during the AGM.

The Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa (EISA) has been appointed to manage and oversee the convocation election. The election will take place through EISA's e-voting platform, which offers verifiable online elections. In 2020, EISA was one of five global organisations that received an award from the World Summit on Information Service (WSIS) for innovation in the use of ICT in managing elections.

A special micro website has also been developed to give UFH alumni an overview of candidates, as well as the rules and voting procedures. (<https://www.ufh.ac.za/convagm/>)

The newly elected UFH executive committee of the convocation will consist of a President, Vice-President, a Secretary and the three additional members serving a four-year term in accordance with the newly gazetted UFH Institutional Statute.

As determined in the Statute and the rules, the Executive Committee of the Convocation in particular will advise and facilitate liaison between UFH and its alumni, create networks to canvass support for the strategic objectives of the university, and organise members of the convocation with a view to facilitate representation of this constituency on appropriate governance structures.

"Judging from the profiles of the candidates, I believe the Executive Committee will be well-placed to adequately and diligently discharge their duties", Mr Zuma, the University Registrar, said.

Commenting on the convocation election and AGM, Professor Sakhela Buhlungu, the Vice-Chancellor said: "We are excited about the digital format of this election and AGM as it allows us to draw in our thousands of alumni from right across the world in an inclusive process. We are hoping that it will unlock new energy and commitment from our loyal alumni to actively support University initiatives and be well informed about the University's strategic objectives and achievements.

“The new format is therefore a turning point, meaning that there will be a team of ambassadors who will walk hand in hand with other structures of the University as active partners in promoting the University. The new executive will be able to reach out to a much larger constituency of UFH alumni.”

He also indicated that he would like to see greater recognition of alumni for their achievements across a wide array of fields and would like to introduce formal alumni awards to honour alumni who truly give expression to the University motto ‘together in excellence’.

Prof Buhlungu said the election of the UFH executive committee of the convocation is a key step in putting in place the requisite governance structures. In 2021, UFH appointed a new Council and exited a governance crisis after the dissolution of the previous council in 2019 resulting in UFH being placed under administration.

Professor Buhlungu said that he would like “to invite the new executive to join forces with management in the University of Fort Hare’s ‘Decade of Renewal – 2020-2030.’”

“This convocation election is the keystone of a significant number of positive developments at the University. We are optimistic, forward-looking and excited about crafting during this year a compelling vision for the University and a new strategic plan to ensure that we systematically work towards a new era of excellence.” Professor Buhlungu stated.

UFH alumni can visit the website at <https://www.ufh.ac.za/convagm/>.

- Ends –

Enquiries:

- jpr@meropa.co.za OR
- jenayp@meropa.co.za